

From: Caroline Ahearn/DC/USEPA/US  
Sent: 4/2/2012 10:28:38 AM  
  
To: ahearn.caroline@epa.gov  
CC:  
Subject: Legislative Update

Today at noon:

1) Dimock calls this week

4/2/12 OSRE and Bern R. on call, Region 3, OSWER (Randy Dietz)

Expected Staff on the Call:

Dimitri Karakitsos - Sen. Inhofe staffer  
Jerry Couri - House Energy and Commerce (majority)  
Tara Rothschild & Clint Woods - House Science (majority)

NOTE: Call with Congressman Marino's staff not confirmed for today. Look for invite at a later date.

1. NATURAL GAS:  
EPA ends water pollution case against Range Resources

Mike Soraghan, E&E reporter

Published: Friday, March 30, 2012  
[email email](#)  
[print print](#)  
[Read full edition](#) [Read full edition](#)  
[Customize edition](#) [Customize edition](#)

Advertisement



U.S. EPA is dropping its case charging Range Resources with causing natural gas to leak into the water supply of two Texas homeowners.

The reversal comes less than two weeks after the agency announced that initial tests of water in Dimock, Pa., did not show unsafe levels of contamination from drilling.

EPA Region VI Compliance Assurance and Enforcement Director John Blevins sent a brief [letter](#) to Range Resources' top lawyer today informing him of the "Environmental Protection Agency's decision to withdraw the above-referenced imminent and substantial endangerment order."

"Resolving the lawsuits with Range allows EPA to shift the agency's focus in this particular case away from litigation and toward a joint effort on the science and safety of energy extraction," said an EPA spokesperson. "EPA and Range will share scientific data and conduct further well monitoring in the area, and Range will also provide useful information and access to EPA in support of EPA's scientific inquiry into the potential impacts of energy extraction on drinking water."

The federal agency overrode state oil and gas regulators at the Texas Railroad Commission in December 2010 to issue an emergency order directing Range to provide clean drinking water and stop the leaking.

Dallas-based EPA Regional Director Al Armendariz said at the time that the agency had to move quickly because he feared the homes involved might explode.

State regulators in Texas exonerated Range Resources shortly thereafter, stating that the gas in the homeowners' wells did not come from the Barnett Shale formation the company was drilling.

"TXOGA is encouraged that science appears to have prevailed in this instance at the Environmental Protection Agency," said Debbie Hastings, executive vice president of the Texas Oil & Gas Association. "The EPA's dismissal of this order against Range Resources also validates the Texas Railroad Commission's nearly 100-year legacy of effective regulation of the oil and gas industry."

"Al Armanderiz and the EPA's Region Six office are guilty of fear mongering, gross negligence and severe mishandling of this case," Texas Railroad Commissioner David Porter said in a statement following the withdrawal. "I hope to see drastic changes made in the way the regional office conducts business in the future -- starting with the termination of Al Armanderiz."

2) Senate Transporation bill, NEPA provisions and CWA restoration fund. Cynthia wants to weigh in on NEPA provisions. Response from Steve Kinberg:

non-responsive

non-responsive